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TAGS: PREL PGOV PARM EG NK

SUBJECT: (C) EGYPT TO FULLY RESPECT UNSCR 1718 OBLIGATIONS
REGARDING NORTH KOREA; BILATERAL TIES "POLITE"

REF: STATE 180512

Classified by Minister Counselor for Economic and Political Affairs William Stewart for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S) During an introductory meeting on November 2 with MFA Deputy Assistant Minister for East Asian Affairs, Ambassador Magdy Amer, poloff delivered reftel demarche on Egypt's obligations with respect to North Korea and UNSCR 1718. Amer was not aware of any Egyptian ties with the Korea Mining Development Trading Corporation (KOMID), but undertook to share the U.S. demarche with his minister and other relevant GOE agencies. He assured poloff that Egypt respected the provisions of UNSCR 1718 and had "no military" ties with Pyongyang.

¶2. (S) Asked directly about reports of Egyptian-North Korean cooperation in the missile area, Amer denied any knowledge on the subject and directed emboff to approach the Ministry of Defense on the matter. Discussing Egypt's ties with North Korea, Amer stressed that Egypt maintained "only polite" bilateral ties at present, and had only three diplomats in its Embassy in Pyongyang. North Korea, Amer said, "helped us during the 1973 war with Israel, contributing "spare parts" for Egyptian aircraft. (Note: The South Korean DCM told emboff on November 1 that the North continued to assist Egypt with maintenance and upgrading of its SCUD missiles; that the North Koreans have 15 diplomats in Cairo versus 11 for the South; and that the North contributed a squadron of MIGs to Egypt's 1973 war effort. End note.) But, bilateral ties have dwindled even farther, he asserted, particularly since last summer's missile tests and the recent nuclear test. There are practically "no trade ties" to speak of, he said. A planned visit to Pyongyang by his boss, Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs Ali Hefny, had been twice scrapped as a result of the North's missile and nuclear tests this year. He did not believe the visit would be rescheduled at any time in the near future.

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